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Training school for women organizers of the National...

Chicago

[1914]

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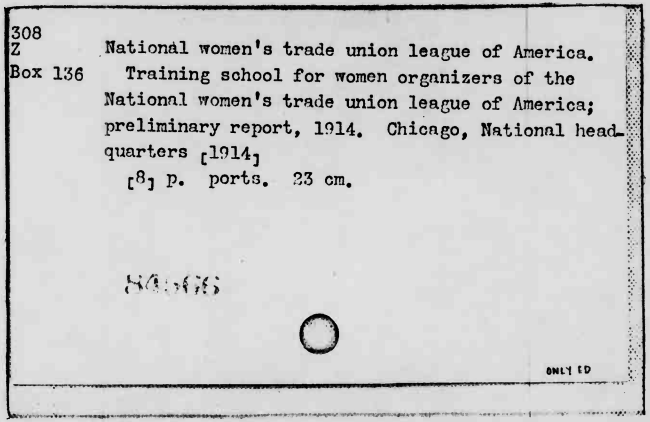

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Training school for women organizers of the National women's trade union league of America; preliminary report, 1914. Chicago, National headquarters [1914]
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Training School *for* Women Organizers

of the

National Women's Trade Union League *of* America

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Box 134

Preliminary Report
1914

National Headquarters
127 North Dearborn Street
Chicago

236

National Women's Trade Union League of America

Endorsed by

The American Federation of Labor and
The Trades and Labor Congress of Canada

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

MRS. RAYMOND ROBINS, President.
MISS MELINDA SCOTT, Vice-President.
MISS S. M. FRANKLIN, Secretary-Treasurer.
MISS AGNES NESTOR, Glove Workers' Union, Chicago.
MISS LOUISA MITTELSTADT, Tin-foilers' Union, Kansas City, Mo.
MISS ROSE SCHNEIDERMANN, Cap Makers' Union, New York.
MISS NELLE A. QUICK, Bindery Women's Union, St. Louis.
MRS. D. W. KNEFLER, Los Angeles.

COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL FOR ORGANIZERS

Appointed by the National Convention, St. Louis, June, 1913

MISS MARY ANDERSON, Executive Board Member, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union.
MISS MELINDA SCOTT, President, United Felt, Panama and Straw Hat Trimmers and Operators' Union of Greater New York.
MISS AMY WALKER, Chicago.
MISS LEONORA O'REILLY, New York.
MRS. JOHN ELLIOTT, New York.
MRS. H. D. FAXON, Kansas City, Mo.
MISS S. M. FRANKLIN, Office Employes' Association, Chicago.

FACULTY AND LECTURERS OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

MRS. RAYMOND ROBINS, President.
MISS ALICE HENRY, Editor, Life and Labor.
MR. SAMUEL GOMPERS, President, American Federation of Labor.
MR. FRANK MORRISON, Secretary, American Federation of Labor.
MISS EDITH ABBOTT, Author, "Women in Industry."
MISS MARY ANDERSON, Member National Executive Board, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union.
MR. CHARLES L. BAIN, General Secretary-Treasurer, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union.
MISS EMILY GREENE BALCH, President, Women's Trade Union League of Boston.
MISS SOPHONISBA BRECKINRIDGE, Secretary, Immigrants' Protective League of Chicago.
MISS MARY DREIER, President, Women's Trade Union League of New York.
MRS. JOHN ELLIOTT, Musical Director, Women's Trade Union League of New York.
MR. JOHN FITZPATRICK, President, Chicago Federation of Labor.
MISS MABEL GILLESPIE, Secretary, Women's Trade Union League of Boston.
MR. SIDNEY HILLMAN, Chief Deputy of the Joint Board of the United Garment Workers, Chicago.
MISS ELIZABETH MALONEY, Waitresses' Union, Local 484.
MR. A. K. MAYNARD, Business Mgr., Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy.
MISS MARY McDOWELL, Vice-President, Women's Trade Union League of Chicago.
MR. CHARLES E. MERRIAM, City Council, Chicago.
MISS AGNES NESTOR, President, International Glove Workers' Union.
MR. VICTOR OLANDER, Vice-President, International Seamen's Union of America.
MISS LEONORA O'REILLY, Vice-President, Women's Trade Union League of New York.
MR. RAYMOND ROBINS, Chicago.
MISS ROSE SCHNEIDERMANN, Chairman, Law Enforcement Committee, Women's Trade Union League of New York.
MISS MELINDA SCOTT, President, United Felt, Panama and Straw Hat Trimmers and Operators' Union of Greater New York.
MISS EMMA STEGHAGEN, Secretary, Women's Trade Union League of Chicago.
MR. JOHN WALKER, President, Illinois State Federation of Labor.

The Need of a Training School for Women Organizers

Extract from the President's Report, Fourth Biennial Convention, St. Louis, June, 1913.

This report, endorsed by the Committee on Education, was unanimously adopted by the Convention and a Committee on School for Organizers appointed to submit plans to the National Executive Board for action.

There are two facts which stand out above all others in the present industrial movement in America. The first is the ever increasing number of women entering every trade, and the second is the successful social uprisings of the workers in the sweated industries. These two facts point to the need of the hour, training for and in organization among women and girls. In all these strikes, women and girls have been in the majority and unless we equip ourselves for definite training in organization work we will not be able to hold what has been gained through suffering and hardship and imprisonment during the strikes. All of us know that the task after a strike is the constructive work of organization, and it is idle to think that this work can be done without organizers. No group of people can hold what they have won in the way of fairer conditions except by their courage, initiative and vigilance and their trained capacity to stand together. The greatest value in the trade agreement, in arbitration and trade boards, and boards of sanitary control lies in the opportunity given for self-government. It is this industrial democracy —the establishment of self-government in the work shops of America —which is the very foundation of trade union principles. Many and many a time this call to self-government, this sense of responsibility towards her condition of work is the first awakening of the young girl. Unorganized she has to accept conditions as she finds them, low wages, long hours, abusive language, insanitary conditions, locked doors, fire dangers, work destructive of her physical strength with its promise of the future, work destructive of her moral and spiritual development. Alone she cannot even protest against these conditions, except at the risk of losing her job. She has tried,—she now knows. She loses her job when she asserts her fundamental right to have a voice as to the conditions under which she works. Self-government is essential to the making of a free people, and self-government in the day's work can be had only by the united action of the workers.

Organization of the workers is imperative, for the sake of the girl and for the sake of the community. Are we equipped for the work of organization? Every week brings requests to the headquarters of the National Women's Trade Union League asking for women organizers to be sent into the field. These demands come from California, Washington, Oregon, Oklahoma, Colorado, Minnesota, Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania. If we are to serve our time as we ought to serve it, representing as we do the hope and the aspirations of the great women's working group of America, organized and unorganized, we have to make possible an equipment to train and send forth women organizers.

The best women organizers without question are the trade union girls. Many a girl capable of leadership and service is held within the ranks because neither she as an individual nor her organization has money enough to set her free for service. Will it be possible for the National Women's Trade Union League to establish a training school for women organizers, even though in the beginning it may be only a training class, offering every trade union girl a scholarship for a year? The course of study ought to include the philosophy of trade unionism, the history of trade unions in America, England and Europe, the history of trade agreements and the study of the best type of modern trade agreement in America, England and Europe, a study of all current labor legislation, current history of the woman movement and the need for full citizenship for women, lessons in parliamentary law, a study in the methods of trade union offices including the office of the American Federation of Labor at Washington, field practice in more than one city and under the leadership of the trade union organizers of the Women's Trade Union League. Am I right in thinking that this is the great need of the hour in the industrial development of America? If I am right, surely the delegates to this convention will find the means to establish a training school for women organizers so that we may be equipped to do our work.

ANALYSIS OF COURSES

The work of the students will be divided between field and class room work.

FIELD WORK.

The field work will be under the direction of the presidents and organizers of the local Women's Trade Union Leagues as designated by the School Council.

Through the co-operation of Mr. Samuel Gompers and Mr. Frank Morrison, graduates will be given the opportunity of studying the administrative work of the offices of the American Federation of Labor in Washington, D. C.

THE STUDY OF TRADE UNIONS.

Administrative and Organization Work.

Organization Work.

Visits to unions.
How to form a union.
How to approach and interest non-union girls.
Distributing cards and dodgers for meetings.
Shop meetings.
Street meetings.
How to conduct meetings.

Administrative Work.

Practice in responsibilities of executive officers.
Initiation of members.
Taking reports of grievances.
Adjusting grievances.
Conferences with employers.

Class Room Work.

History of Trade Unions in America.
Local Unions.

The First Guild in America, "The Company of Shoo Makers," Boston, 1648.
The First Local Union in America, "The Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers," Philadelphia, 1794.
First strike for the Ten-Hour Day, House Carpenters, 1825.
First Central Labor Body in America, Philadelphia, 1827.
First Central Labor Body of the District of Columbia, called the "Trades Union," 1833.

International Unions.
National Unions.

The Trades Union National Convention, New York, July 2, 1834.
International Industrial Assembly of North America, Louisville, Kentucky, September 21, 1864.
National Labor Congress, Baltimore, August 20, 1866.
National Labor Union, New York, September 21, 1868.

Knights of Labor, 1869.
American Federation of Labor, 1881.
National Women's Trade Union League, 1903.
Trade Organization.
Industrial Organization.
Study of Trade Agreements, Trade Boards and Boards of Arbitration.
Conspiracy Trials of Wage Earners.

First Trial of Wage Earners for Trade Union Conspiracy, "Philadelphia Cordwainers' Case," 1806.
Last (?) Trial of Wage Earners for Trade Union Conspiracy, 1914.
Danbury Hatters' Case.
Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison Case.
United Mine Workers of America Case.

Outline of History of Trade Unions in England and Europe.
History of National Women's Trade Union League.

Its purpose.
Organization.
Basis of Membership.
Relationships.
The National Executive Board—organization.
Constitutions of Local Leagues in city and state organizations.

Parliamentary law according to Robert's Rules of Order with drill.
How to form an organization.
How to frame and adopt a constitution and by-laws.
Elections.
Committees.

PUBLIC SPEAKING.

Outlining addresses.
Reports of conferences.
Voice training.
Classes in advanced English.

RECORDS AND REPORTS.

The business correspondence of the Women's Trade Union League.
Reports—minutes of meetings.
Bookkeeping (auditing, receiving of dues, etc.).
Writing for the press.
Writing of editorials and articles to be submitted to LIFE AND LABOR.

PHOTO BY HINE

COURTESY "LIFE AND LABOR"

"In the ranks of the army of labor, are several million young working girls upon whom falls most heavily the burden of the battle. Upon their vision, upon their knowledge and fortitude, depends the hope of a whole great people."

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

International Unions.
National Unions.

The Trades Union National Convention, New York, July 2, 1834.
International Industrial Assembly of North America, Louisville, Kentucky, September 21, 1864.
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COURTESY LIFE AND LABOR

PHOTO BY MAE

"In the ranks of the army of labor, are several million young working girls upon whom falls most heavily the burden of the battle. Upon their vision, upon their knowledge and fortitude, depends the hope of a whole great people."

Outline of protective legislation in England and Europe.

Protective legislation in America.

(The Legislative Program of the National Women's Trade Union League and the Fundamental Demands of the American Federation of Labor.)

History of the Woman's Movement in America.

Status of the Woman Suffrage Movement.

CORRESPONDENCE WORK

In order to develop work for non-resident students, the school will undertake correspondence work in:

The history of trade unions in America.

The study of trade agreements, trade boards and boards of arbitration.

Parliamentary law.

Current protective legislation.

Books will be loaned from the school on payment of postage and a deposit guaranteeing the safe return.

LIBRARY.

The school has made arrangements by which it is entitled to borrow from the well selected library of the Women's Trade Union League of Chicago.

In co-operation with the Women's Trade Union League of Chicago, the National School hopes to have a well-equipped library on social and economic subjects at the disposal of the students.

TERMS ON APPLICATION

National Women's Trade Union League of America

127 North Dearborn Street, Chicago

TELEPHONE RANDOLPH 2834

WSH # 22740

END OF
TITLE